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and Jeff Ach, W2FU

2002 January VHF Sweepstakes Results

When the winds whip, and snow buries the barbecue grill, it's fall in Rochester, NY. By now, the preparation for the January VHF SS is in full swing! Since the dawn of this contest, the Rochester VHF Group has been in the mix, hammering away. The competitive spirit really shines with this contest, as it's not just you playing—you help your friends compete for total glory! And, quite frankly, what else is there to do in the tundra of upstate NY in January? Over the years, there have been *many* participants who've outdone themselves time after time, with the final score being the only memory many of us have. But—we've all heard stories about contests past, and the yarns seem to take on mythical meaning—perhaps driving each of us to NOT do what's been done before. With the 50+ year history of the RVHFG, there's lots to talk about, many stories to share—and many more to come.

The tale of the “one that got away” is fresh in many of our minds this year. Hours prior to the starting gun, 50 MHz was *wide open* into Europe. Signals of incredible strength from England, France, The Netherlands... it was *fantastic* stuff. A couple people commented that they were running upwards of 100 per hour rate! As soon as the contest started, *click!* The band went out. Oh, there were some interesting openings on Sunday to the East Coast. A few folks caught up with some Europeans, but more caught the good transcontinental openings between W1/2 and W6/7, giving out some new multipliers. Conditions on the other bands were, well, okay. Had 6 m blessed us with some good F2 propagation, things might have been slightly more interesting! I mean, when was the last time anyone had worked over 1000 QSOs on 50 MHz alone? It's been a while, and it's *well* overdue. Who remembers the days when working a few *dozen* stations above 144 MHz was a *great* contest? Yes, friends. Things have changed.

With the introduction of Club Competition in the September VHF Contest, there may arise many new rivalries in the years to come. In my mind, the longest-running “Grudge match” has been the RVHFG and Mt Airy VHF Radio Club! For years, each

were battling for top-honors in the *Unlimited Category* to take the gavel. In this battle, the Packrats have won all but a handful—and this year proves no exception! With 50 logs and over 2.1 million points, they've proven their dominance of this class! In the *Medium Category*, the Rochester VHF Group, with a top score of 2.3 million points, defeats recently arrived rivals PVRC and NEWS for top honors. Finally, in the *Local Category*, Cedar Rapids Microwave Society outdistanced the Delaware Valley VHF Society for top honors! NICE going! Congratulations to *all* those participating in Affiliated Club Competition! No matter how you do, it's great to know that club participation is strong, with 326 club members using their points toward the cause. *Keep it going!*

Single operator has changed in the past couple years, with the addition of a Low-Power class. That doesn't change some of the challenges faced by the intrepid people insane enough to subject themselves to 34-hours of solo VHF+ adventure! Just imagine what would happen if, on a cold winter morning you notice your

antennas are askew. “Aw, just a few minutes to fix the rotator and I'm back in business” you say. So, you grab the ladder, climb onto the roof in your PJs and begin reorienting your antennas. Meanwhile, the blowing snow and biting wind take the ladder down to the ground, with you stuck on the rooftop. How would *that* hurt your score? Poor Chuck, apparently he was trapped for quite some time up there, as his wife was off at Church. For those of you who remember K2YCO, this was one of his legendary tales.

I'm sure there are some interesting tales of woe and victory in Single-Operator Low Power class. We have another repeat winner! Bob Striegl, K2DRH does it again! With a score that would have placed in the Top-10 *high* power class, he wins by *just* squeaking past Dale Clement, AF1T with 136 k. Not far behind, is Nobel Laureate Joe Taylor, K1JT, from his Princeton, New Jersey home, with almost 131 k. These intrepid single-ops do it with less than 200 W on 6/2—which is hard to believe having listened to AF1T rattle off back-scatter QSOs on 50 MHz....

Top Ten

Single Operator Low Power Limited Multioperator

K2DRH	136,320	AA4ZZ	169,952
AF1T	135,261	N2BJ	153,000
K1JT	130,914	W2ODH	149,621
W3KJ	69,915	W3SO	128,856
WA8RJF	57,838	N8KOL	116,070
W2EV	50,512	K8CC	74,175
W1PM	45,305	W1QK	69,680
N3FUJ	44,800	W1VHF	57,474
K2HZN	41,520	K2AA	41,088
WA1MKE	39,550	W1XX	40,144

Single Operator High Power Multioperator

K1TEO	386,973	K8GP	749,056
K2AXX	252,126	W2FU	660,656
KM0T	214,760	K3YTL	601,392
WA3NUF	205,002	N2PA	404,712
WW8M	198,360	N3NGE	320,892
K1UHF	186,636	W0RSJ	165,760
WZ1V	160,460	N3YMS	103,512
K3DNE	146,374	WA3ZKR	48,762
W4RX	121,044	K1ZE	44,872
W3RJW	119,600	W2QK	43,990

Single Operator Portable

K6MI	40,810	N2JMH	258,666
W3SE	40,328	K2TER	217,019
N3FTI	11,524	W5DF	184,569
KA6AMD	10,857	N9YZK	181,388
KG4LEV	3,510	ND3F	147,725
WB0LJC	3,240	N6TEB	147,504
N9MYK	2,568	W7GHZ	146,568
N8XA	2,520	NA0IA	141,526
N7WLO	1,440	KA0YSQ	134,160
WB2AMU	1,406	N6DN	129,682

Affiliated Club Competition

	Score	Entries
Unlimited Category	2,118,011	50

Medium Category

Rochester VHF Group	2,336,817	30
Potomac Valley Radio Club	1,696,124	24
North East Weak Signal Group	1,378,889	26
Murgas ARC	602,080	3
Society of Midwest Contesters	597,226	13
Northern Lights Radio Society	434,729	21
Western States Weak Signal	211,833	7
Six Meter Club of Chicago	206,249	18
Badger Contesters	194,083	20
Downey ARC	193,567	5
Crawford County ARC	174,624	21
South Jersey Radio Assn	128,124	7
Yankee Clipper Contest Club	118,564	5
Mad River Radio Club	102,651	5
Florida Contest Group	29,888	5
Lawton Fort Sill ARC	16,406	12
Tennessee Contest Group	16,367	3
Bergen ARA	10,635	3
Hampden County Radio Assn	4,009	4
Bears of Manchester	3,532	4
Mobile Sixers Radio Club	2,302	4
Rochester (NY) DX Assn	2,216	4
Burlington County Radio Club	1,928	4

Local Category

Cedar Rapids Microwave Society	399,694	5
Delaware Valley VHF Society	154,907	7
Medina 2 Meter Group	10,480	4
Northern New York Contest Club	7,650	4
Meriden ARC	1,064	5
Central Ohio Operators Klub	993	3

Now, I can only *dream* that Jeff Klein, K1TEO, has a number of tales to tell. Retaining his crown as *Single-Operator High Power* champ this January, he soundly trounces Mark Hoffman, K2AXX for top Single-Op High Power honors by 134 k. Mark and Jeff need to watch their backs, though—coming up from another snowy tundra region is Mike King, KM0T.

The *Single-Operator Portable* category requires some serious planning, effort and talent to win. In the lead John Morrice, K6MI, narrowly escapes fellow Californian Wes Printz, W3SE by a very narrow margin (482 points!). Another 667 points separated Steve Kerns, N3FTI and Erich Muschinske, KA6AMD for 3rd and 4th places! This is one hot class. QRP power, a good location and good antennas are usually what it takes to top the box.

In the hall of giants, where anything goes—*Multioperator* rules supreme. Using all amateur bands above 50 MHz, these stations sometimes go to extremes to improve performance—to the end of capturing the title of #1 US/Canada. Other stations depend on multioperator stations for frequency reference, for beacons, for signs of life late at night. Yep—the multioperator unlimited reigns supreme.

If you've never had the opportunity to operate from a Multioperator station before, it's really worth the effort to find one and try it. There have been *many* competitive teams in the past, and this year has proven no exception. The art of collecting enough equipment, operators and time is no small feat—let alone the cooking, cleaning and maintaining what other people break! Literally! I remember one year while operating at a multi-multi station during January—it was *cold* outside! The rotator on the tower froze, and we thought it wise to replace it. SO, a couple intrepid people went up to remove the rotator and replace it with another. No problem, until the disconnected rotator decided

to make a quick descent. Fortunately, it landed in about 3 feet of snow, no further damage to itself or anyone else. However, what we didn't know until a few months later, was what it *did* damage! The 10 GHz stuff stopped working well for the remainder of the weekend after that incident, but no one made the correlation. The rotator landed squarely atop the WR-90 waveguide, snapping it in two at the base of the tower. However, buried in snow—we had no way of knowing! Whoops!

Hoping that nothing like *this* happened to them, AA4ZZ in NC managed to beat up on the competition in the *Limited Multioperator* class, defeating N2BJ and crew by only 16 k. Not far behind was W2ODH from Sunny California. Limited M/M is an excellent class, as you are only using four bands—but not limited to *running* only four! If you have 50 MHz-1296 MHz, run 'em *all*—just turn in the best four bands!

In the *Unlimited Multioperator* class, another classic battle ensues. This time, the Grid Pirates of K8GP capture the flag. With a class-busting score of 749 k, they made W2FU walk the plank at 660 k, and K3YTL at 601 k. These scores are pretty tight, making for an exciting rematch next time around. One slip, like a stinkbug across the HV transformer (yes, there's a story about that, too!) blowing up the 2 m amp—and any of these well-oiled machines could go crashing. It's the ultimate battle of Murphy vs Man. Wonder why Murphy always plans Ice Storms?

Multioperator is controlled chaos. Roving, on the other hand, is Chaos *on the road*. Imagine if you will, cramming all that gear you've got in your shack into a van. Then take your tower, lay it across the top and figure out a way to raise it. Then wire it all so you don't sit on the road somewhere minus dc to start the vehicle. And finally, get it so it's roadworthy and drive it around. This is

the ultimate form of VHF+ contesting. I mean, how many of us drive around in January, only to discover that the route you've plotted to your site includes a couple miles on a Snowmobile trail? Or that road you *think* gets you somewhere really doesn't? In addition, it can be downright *cold*. One rover pulls up to a site, only to find another already there. The new arrival starts pushing up the tower, starting the generator, trying *really* hard to get it done quickly, when one of the operators in the other rover comments "I'm *really* glad I'm in where it's warm..." Worse, if you are driving in a snowstorm, and find the driving lights to be more effective than the headlights! Yep. This is the "lunatic fringe."

And N2JMH/R took the lunatic prize this year. Visiting seven grids in his Blue Whale rover, he takes top honors a second year. Following right behind is K2TER/R, with a 217 k score to boot. The top gun for travel appears to be N0DQS/R—who visited 18 grids during the contest period! A number of rovers visited 14 grids, and on down the list—you can't imagine how far that really is unless you've done it yourself!

Make sure you visit the expanded contest results on *ARRLWeb* at www.arrl.org/contests/results. Included in the online results you will find an expanded write-up, participant submitted Soapbox, a searchable database, and more box scores and tables. January always offers a wide range of operating challenges and opportunities. Whether roving, playing competitively from a large multioperator station, honing your skills from home or accepting the challenge of portable operation, the ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes has something to offer for almost everyone. Start making plans now to be "radioactive" the weekend of January 18-20, 2003.

Scores

Each line score lists call sign, score, stations worked, multipliers, and band (A= 50 MHz, B = 144 MHz, C = 222 MHz, D = 432 MHz, 9 = 902 MHz, E = 1296 MHz, F = 2304 MHz, I = 10 GHz).

1	W1QK (+W1JMA, K1PHG, N1ABY)	WW1Z
	69,680 738 80 L ABCD	10,148 174 43 B ABCD9
Connecticut	KB1DFB (@KB1H) (+KB1H)	8,360 156 38 B BD
K1IM	18,450 318 50 A AD	5,049 109 33 B ABCDF
WB1GCM	4,650 164 25 A ABCD	W1MRQ
K1WVX	3,475 100 25 A ABCD E	W1OA 1,188 62 18 B ABC
N1OPO	1,632 85 16 A ABCD	KB1QV 546 37 13 B ABD
KB1DHW	1,577 70 19 A BD	
WB1GIC	1,335 81 15 A ABD	
KA1KOJ	1,311 60 19 A ABD	
W1DMM	510 49 10 A ABD	
WY1U	442 34 13 A AB	
N1SPI	420 28 14 A ABD	
N1TUP	200 32 5 A ABD	
KB1FFV	81 26 3 A BD	
K1MKF	16 16 1 A B	
KB1CIW	6 6 1 A B	
K1TEO	386,973 1039 219 B ABCD9EFGI	
K1UHF	186,636 831 151 B ABCDEFI	
W2IV	160,460 698 142 B ABCD9EFG	
K1GX	114,932 534 118 B ABCD9EFGHI	
K1FO	99,632 624 104 B ABCDE	
W3EP	61,712 480 116 B ABDE	
W1QJL	2,288 76 22 B ABCD	
K1QNF	616 44 14 B AB	
WA1GTP	377 29 13 B AB	
	K1ZE (+N1DGFE)	
	44,872 425 71 M ABCD9E	
	W1PM	W1XX (+K1JX)
	45,305 372 85 A ABCD 9E	40,144 320 104 L ABCD
Eastern Massachusetts	K1UR	W1XM (KB1CGZ, KT1D, KB1CTH, KA2ZLZ, KD1KY, KF2VV, N2ZJZ, ops)
	7,455 179 35 A ABCD	W1GSL (KB1GRS, KB1HQR, KB1HDK, KB1HQM, 23,976 352 54 L ABCDE
	N1LDY	N1FDX (+N1F1)
	6,270 185 33 A ABCD	6,346 167 38 L AB
	K1A1EK	N1MPT (+KA1EZH, N1FNM)
	6,014 119 31 A BCDE	3,900 156 25 L AB
	KV1J	N1OP (KB1FBD, N1TQ, ops)
	3,498 226 22 A ABCD	57,474 534 103 L ABD
	W1DYJ	3,240 108 30 L AB
	2,460 123 20 A AB	
	K1VU	
	1,387 62 19 A ABD	
	K1EP	
	1,032 84 12 A ABD	
	K1AOJ	
	864 21 16 A ABD EI	
	N1BC	
	832 51 13 A ABCD	
	N1VQR	
	473 35 11 A ABD	
	N1HTS	
	120 20 6 A B	
	W1XH	
	56 14 4 A AB	
	W1GHZ	
	25,172 246 62 B ABCD9EI	
	W1BDF	
	24,732 198 54 B ABCD9EFGHI	
	N1GJ	
	7,956 135 39 B ABCD9EF	
	N1EVK	
	1,880 62 20 B ABCDI	
	W1XX (+K1JX)	WW1Z
	40,144 320 104 L ABCD	10,148 174 43 B ABCD9
	W1XM (KB1CGZ, KT1D, KB1CTH, KA2ZLZ, KD1KY, KF2VV, N2ZJZ, ops)	8,360 156 38 B BD
	W1GSL (KB1GRS, KB1HQR, KB1HDK, KB1HQM, 23,976 352 54 L ABCDE	5,049 109 33 B ABCDF
	N1FDX (+N1F1)	W1MRQ
	6,346 167 38 L AB	W1OA 1,188 62 18 B ABC
	N1MPT (+KA1EZH, N1FNM)	KB1QV 546 37 13 B ABD
	3,900 156 25 L AB	
	N1OP (KB1FBD, N1TQ, ops)	
	57,474 534 103 L ABD	
	3,240 108 30 L AB	
	W1BQ	Rhode Island
	1,054 59 17 A ABD	W1BAT
		686 49 14 A AB
	New Hampshire	W1CPC
		372 28 12 A ABD
	W1VHF	W1VHF (K1RWK, W1JJM, K1KT, ops)
		57,474 534 103 L ABD
	W1BQ	KB1HAR (+N1YKH)
		1,936 86 22 L ABD
	Maine	
		Vermont
	W1AQ	KA1BSZ
	1,054 59 17 A ABD	24 8 3 A AB
		W1AIM
		36,088 264 104 B ABCD9E
	W1VHF	K1LPS
		11,426 135 58 B ABCD9E
	W1VHF	W1FNP (AC1H, KA1UAG, NS1EP, AA1KL, WB1BRE, WA1ZCN, N1YMQ, KB1FDA, KB1EGH, ops)
		18,358 247 67 L ABCD
	W1VHF	NE1C (K1X, KB1GJR, KB1FWN, KB1FSU, KB1FVL, AA1YW, KB1FTX, ops)
		525 35 15 L AB
	W1VHF	
	W1VHF	Western Massachusetts
		N1DPM
		23,912 201 61 A ABCD9EFGI
		K1ISW
		6,580 166 39 A ABCD

